

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 857

By McDonald

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Dr. Hal Reed Ramer,
President Emeritus of Volunteer State
Community College.

WHEREAS, it was with great sorrow and a profound sense of loss that the members of this General Assembly and the citizens of our State learned of the passing of Dr. Hal Reed Ramer of Nashville, a gentleman of the highest honor and integrity; and

WHEREAS, a visionary leader in higher education who was devoted to his institution, Dr. Hal R. Ramer served with acumen and industry as President of Volunteer State Community College from 1970 until his retirement in 2003, when he was most appropriately named President Emeritus; and

WHEREAS, born in Kenton, Tennessee, on June 8, 1923, Hal Reed Ramer received his Bachelor of Science from George Peabody College in 1947 and completed his Master of Science in Social Work at the University of Tennessee in 1952; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Ramer obtained his Ph.D. from Ohio State University in 1963, having been employed at the university during the previous ten years in the positions of Staff Assistant to the President, Assistant Dean of Men, and Director of the George Wells Knight International Center while he completed his doctoral studies in higher education administration; and

WHEREAS, returning to Nashville in 1963, Dr. Hal Ramer accepted the position of Assistant State Commissioner for Higher Education of the Tennessee Department of Education, serving in that capacity until 1970. During his tenure as Assistant State Commissioner he also served as Head of the Administrative Staff of the Division of Higher Education of the State Board of Education, which later served as the governing board for the six Tennessee regional universities, the community college system, and the state technical institutes; and

WHEREAS, an education innovator, Dr. Hal R. Ramer played an integral role in the establishment of Tennessee's community college network, working closely with the Governor,

the General Assembly, and the State Board of Education. In recognition of his efforts, Dr. Ramer received the Tennessee Department of Education's Distinguished Service Award in 1970; and

WHEREAS, named the founding President of Volunteer State Community College on July 1, 1970, Dr. Hal Reed Ramer would spend the next thirty-three years giving his full measure of devotion to the growth and expansion of that esteemed institution to become the longest-serving president in the history of the Tennessee Board of Regents system; and

WHEREAS, involved with the planning of the new community college since its inception, Dr. Hal Ramer was there on opening day in October of 1971 as students took classes in churches, secondary schools, and a National Guard Armory, while the new administration operated out of buildings in downtown Gallatin, including a dusty old hotel; and

WHEREAS, under the astute and visionary leadership of Dr. Hal R. Ramer, Volunteer State Community College became a full-service higher education institution, offering seventy programs with an enrollment of 8,000 students per semester on a campus that comprises sixteen buildings and boasts additional facilities at the Vol State at Livingston campus; and

WHEREAS, over 100,000 students have attended Volunteer State Community College, a number that stands as a tribute to the commitment and tireless efforts of Dr. Hal Reed Ramer; and

WHEREAS, retiring as President of Volunteer State on January 31, 2003, Dr. Ramer continued his ardent support of the school, serving as a member of the Volunteer State College Foundation. The Hal R. Ramer Society was established to honor the generous donors who make student scholarships and advancements possible and the Ramer Oratorical Contest is held each year to showcase Vol State students who excel in speech and communications; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, Dr. Ramer was honored in 2003 as the first recipient of the Lifetime Service Award from Peabody College of Vanderbilt University and in 2005, he was named the first recipient of the Masonic Lodge of Gallatin's Community Service Award; in 2006, he was honored by the Sumner Foundation at their Stellar Tribute Honoree; and

WHEREAS, an active member of numerous civic, charitable, and cultural organizations, Hal R. Ramer was an esteemed member of the Tennessee Historical Society, the Tennessee Academy of Science, the Knights of Pythias, and the Sumner County Historical Society; and

WHEREAS, a deeply spiritual gentleman, Dr. Hal Ramer was a member of the Administration Board of Belmont United Methodist Church in Nashville, which he served faithfully for many years in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, Hal Reed Ramer leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the remarkable life of this exceptional educator, public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Dr. Hal Reed Ramer, reflecting fondly upon his bountiful life of academic excellence, his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Dr. Ramer.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.